

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Kurdish Conflict: Insights, Lessons, and Broader Implications for Middle Eastern Conflicts

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Recent efforts by the Turkish government to address the Kurdish Conflict have emerged from an unexpected political figure—the leader of an ultra-nationalist coalition party. This move has generated significant public attention, but the attention has focused mostly on the complex regional developments (including Israeli military actions extending beyond Palestine into Lebanon, Iran, and potentially Syria), the leaders' motivations, and the conflicting parties' interests. These dynamics highlight the necessity for deeper engagement with the societal aspects of peace and reflection on national memories, the search for alternative narratives beyond borders, societal diversity, and the complex political agency in the Kurdish conflict.

This roundtable brings together five scholars from different disciplines to discuss various methodological and theoretical approaches to Kurdish Studies, emphasizing the multifaceted nature and consequences of the protracted Kurdish conflict, within the broader Middle Eastern context. The discussion seeks to enhance our understanding of the conflict's consequences and different forms of resistance shaped by the root causes of the conflict. Each participant will explore innovative strategies employed by Kurdish communities, such as memory work, peace and justice initiatives, film, and self-defence, to resist oppression, confront historical injustices, and promote emancipatory politics.

Central questions to be addressed include: How do varied methodological and theoretical approaches enhance our understanding of conflict and resistance? What kind of insights can be helpful to put the Kurdish conflict into dialog with other ongoing regional conflicts, such as those in Syria and Palestine? The roundtable will evaluate the contributions and limitations of these approaches within politically repressive contexts. By exploring the gains, challenges, and limitations of interdisciplinary engagement, the discussion aims to create a space for reflecting on the potential for innovative strategies for societies affected by war and conflict in Middle East.

Track Classification: International Studies of the Mediterranean, Middle East & Asia Working Group